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In a survey carried out in March 1967, questionnaires were sent to about 39 percent of the lawyers in New York State to find out their reactions to the TV series 'BEHIND THE LAW'. Of seven percent of the lawyers returning the questionnaires, one half had seen at least one or two of the shows, and 12 percent had viewed ten or more. Almost all of the respondents thought the programs served a specific need for New York attorneys, and three-fourths of them thought that TV is either 'better than' or 'about the same' as other media in continuing legal education. Most of the lawyers considered the presentation good to excellent as a medium of instruction, and over half of them thought that future TV series on law should deal with estates, criminal law, trial, appeal, taxes, and real estates. A full and detailed report of the survey, with questionnaires, is furnished. (GO)

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A Survey of the Reaction of Lawyers to the Television Series "Behind the Law"

by

ROBERT M. BROWN

May 1967

Instructional Resources Center
State University of New York at Albany

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

The survey was sent out in March 1967 to find out the reactions of New York State attorneys to the continuing legal education TV programs, "BEHIND THE LAW." This was a series of ten programs which analyzed the laws passed by the 1966 session of the New York State Legislature which had practical significance for practicing lawyers. The series was developed by the New York School of Law at Buffalo and shown over television in the metropolitan areas of the state. The survey was mailed to two thousand of the five thousand one hundred forty-six lawyers in New York State. This represents a sample of about thirty-nine percent of the lawyers in the state. Of the two thousand questionnaires that were sent out, three hundred sixty-nine or about eighteen percent were returned. This sample represents about seven percent of the lawyers in New York State.

Table I gives the total number of lawyers in the largest cities covered by the ETV station signals, the approximate number surveyed from each city, and the approximate percentage surveyed from each city.

TABLE I

CITY	*TOTAL NO. LAWYERS	(APPROXIMATE) NO. SURVEYED	PERCENTAGE
Niagara Falls	120	120	100%
Buffalo	1520	370	24%
Rochester	1080	540	50%
Syracuse	800	255	32%
Auburn	70	70	100%
Utica	260	130	50%
Rome	52	52	100%
Schenectady	270	135	50%
Albany	750	250	33%
Troy	210	105	50%
Rensselaer	14	14	100%
TOTAL	5146	2000	39%

*According to N,Y. Lawyers Diary And Manual, 1966.

There was no record of which lawyers watched the programs, so the above method was used to determine the reactions to the programs. This is not a random sample and should not be interpreted as such. The important feature of the survey is the responses of the lawyers who returned the questionnaires.

Many of the questions had a "closed-ended" answer. That is, the respondent checked a box. These answers were simply added or tabulated. Most of the questions were "open-ended." That is, the respondents were asked to comment on a question such as; "How would you rate the caliber of instruction?" All of the responses were grouped into four to six categories, so that all the individual comments could be tabulated. Thus individual responses were placed into such groups as favorable, unfavorable, and other such categories.

Usually, some questions were not answered by all respondents, so that the total number answering each question varied from the total response. For example, three hundred sixty-nine questionnaires were returned, but only one hundred forty-three answered question number two. Thus the "base" for question number two was one hundred forty-three, and the percentages given for the various responses to question two were <u>not</u> based on the total number of questionnaires (three hundred sixty-nine). Pather, the responses were based on the number who answered that question which was one hundred forty-three. The base varied from question to question and was given with each question.

SUMMARY

1. In the past year have you seen any continuing legal education TV programs?

About half of the lawyers who returned the survey had seen at least one of the shows.

If you have viewed these programs, how many?

Half of the lawyers viewed one or two and twelve percent viewed ten or more.

2. Where have you usually viewed these programs?

Most of the lawyers viewed the programs at home.

3. Over what channel(s) have you seen them?

Most of the lawyers saw the programs over UHF.

4. How did you find out about the TV series?

Most of the lawyers learned of the TV series through the county bar association.

5. Do you feel the programs serve a specific need for N.Y. attorneys?

Almost all lawyers answered yes.

6. Of the programs you have seen, which did you appreciate the most and why?

The most popular show was "Amendments to the Uniform Commercial Code."

7. Which did you believe to be the least effective and why?

The least liked program was "Amendments to the Uniform Commercial Code."

8. How would you compare the effectiveness of TV versus other media in continuing legal education?

About three-fourths of the lawyers felt that TV is either "better than" or "about the same." The main reason given was that it was convenient to watch and better prepared.

9. Have you obtained study notes offered by SU School of Law?

About a quarter of the lawyers had obtained the study notes.

Have you found them valuable?

Almost all lawyers who obtained the notes found them valuable.

10. Would periodic study group sessions keyed to the programs broadcast appeal to you?

About three-fourths of the lawyers answered yes.

If "yes", what type?

About half preferred regular seminars.

11. How often would you attend such discussion meetings if they were nearby?

About half of the lawyers answered "once a month."

12. How would you rate the caliber of instruction, quality of TV presentation, use of teaching aids, and program scheduling?

Please list any suggestions for improvement of the presentation.

Most of the lawyers said that the shows were either good or excellent.

13. Please list the subjects that would be of greatest interest to you in a future TV series on the law?

Estates, criminal law, trial, appeal, taxes, and real estates were suggested by over half the lawyers.

14. What area of law constitutes your major legal activity?

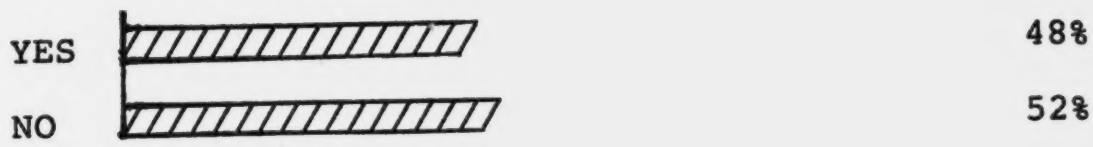
Estates, trusts, real estate, criminal law, trial, appeal, and corporations were the areas listed by over half of the lawyers.

15. In what aspect of law does your greatest interest lie?

The greatest interest for half of the lawyers was in estates, trusts, criminal law, trial, appeal, or real estate.

CODE: / represents 3%

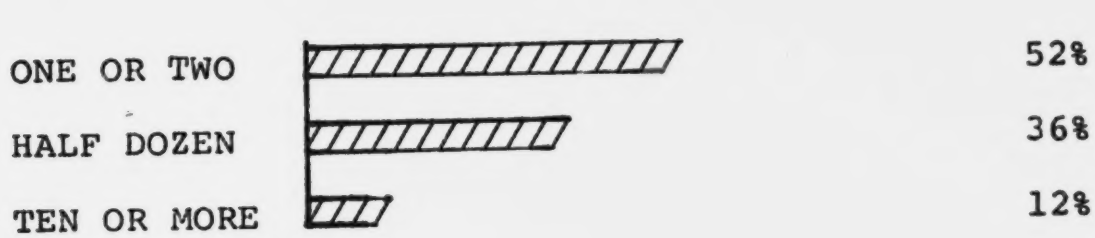
1. In the past year, have you seen any continuing legal education TV programs?



BASE 100%: 358

Of the lawyers answering this question, approximately one-half have, at one time or another, viewed the legal education TV programs.

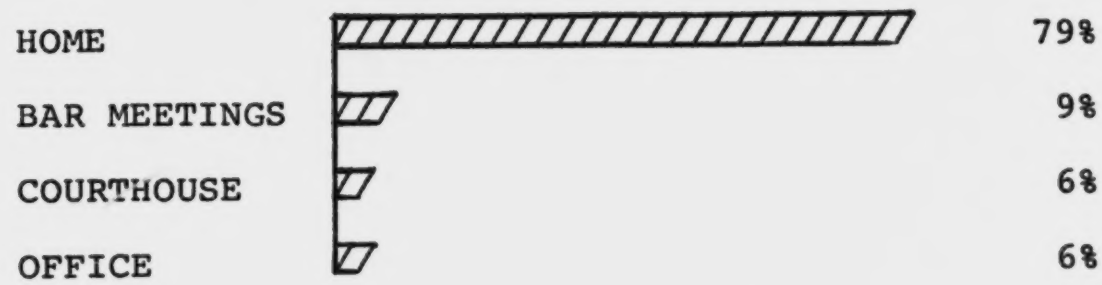
If you have viewed these programs, how many?



BASE 100%: 164

Of those lawyers viewing the programs, only 12% were consistent viewers, while 52% have viewed only one or two programs.

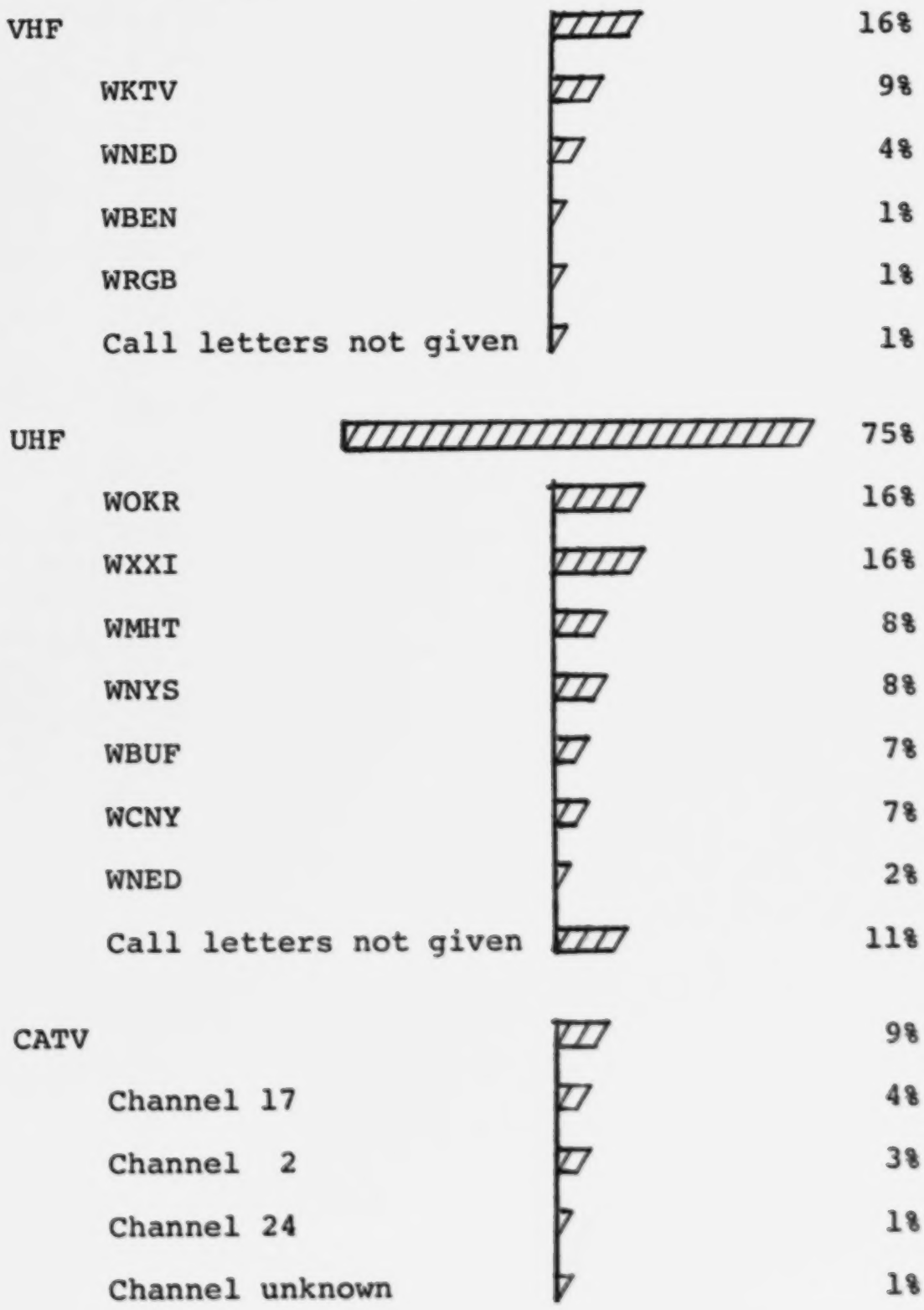
2. Where have you usually viewed these programs?



BASE 100%: 143

Over three-fourths of the lawyers answering this question watched the programs at home. The remaining lawyers watched the programs at bar meetings, the courthouse, or their offices.

3. Over what channel(s) have you seen them?

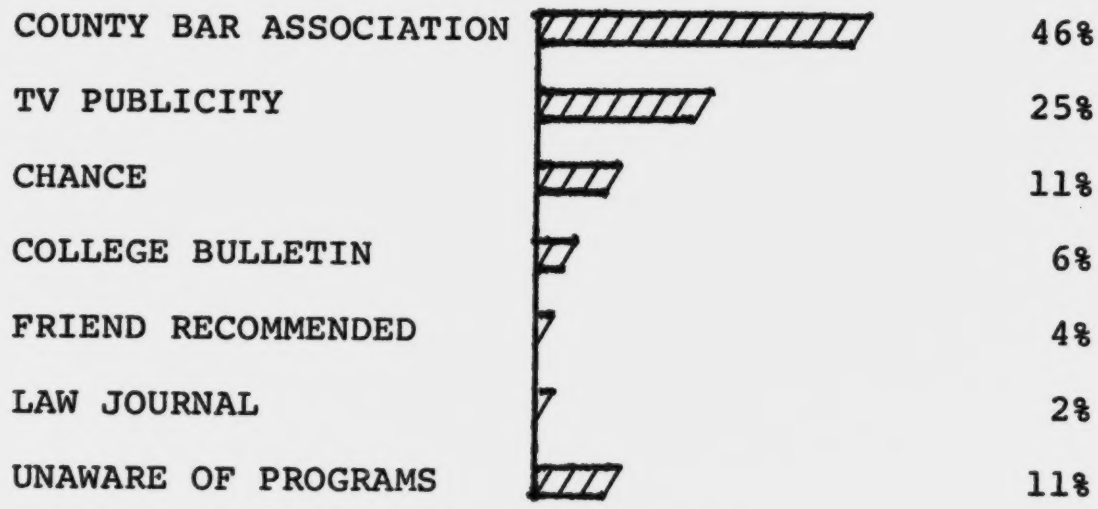


BASE 100%: 150

3. con't

About three-fourths of the lawyers who answered this question viewed the programs over UHF stations. VHF networks were used about sixteen percent of the time, and cable TV was used the remaining nine percent of the time. Some of the lawyers who answered this question were not sure over which station they viewed the programs. Because of this, the percentages given are approximate.

4. How did you find out about the TV series?



BASE 100%: 251

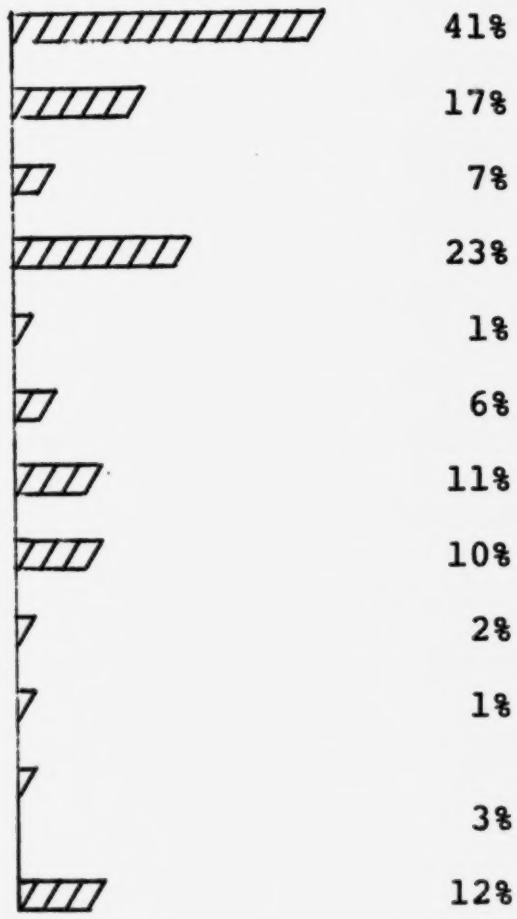
Almost half of the lawyers who answered this question found out about the TV series from the County Bar Association. A quarter of the lawyers learned of the TV series from TV publicity. Of the lawyers who answered, 11% were unaware of the programs, and the questionnaire informed them about the programs.

5. Do you feel the programs serve a specific need for New York lawyers?

BASE 100%: 223

Most of the lawyers who answered this question felt that the programs do serve a specific need, and only 7% felt that there is no need for the programs. Many of the lawyers who had not viewed any programs still agreed that the shows serve a specific need.

6. Of the programs you have seen, which did you appreciate the most and why?



AMENDMENTS TO THE UNIFORM COMMERCIAL CODE	41%
GOOD PRESENTATION	17%
FIELD OF PRACTICE	7%
ESTATES, POWERS, AND TRUSTS	23%
GOOD PRESENTATION	1%
FIELD OF PRACTICE	6%
THE NEW DIVORCE LAW	11%
UNIFORM JUSTICE COURT ACT	10%
GOOD PRESENTATION	2%
FIELD OF PRACTICE	1%
AMENDMENTS TO CIVIL PRACTICE LAWS AND RULES	3%
ALL PROGRAMS WERE GOOD	12%

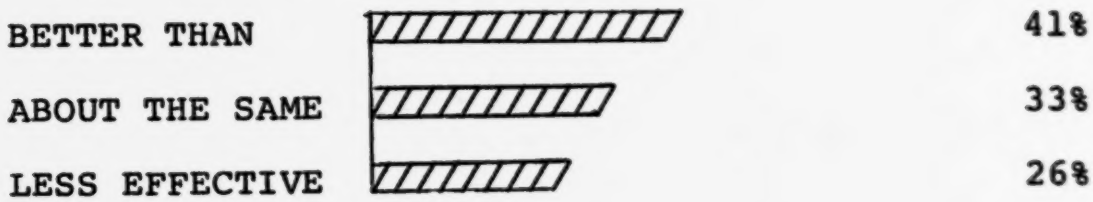
BASE 100%: 105 (multiple answers)

About half of the lawyers appreciated the programs on amendments to the Uniform Commercial Code the most. Of the 34% who made comments on the various programs, 20% said that they appreciated the program because of the good presentation. The remaining 14% appreciated the programs because it was concerned with their particular field of practice.

7. Of the programs you have seen, which did you believe to be the least effective and why?

Only 7% of the lawyers felt that any of the programs were least effective. Of the 7%, most felt that some of the programs were too elementary. About a third of this group felt that the program on Amendments to the Uniform Commercial Code was the least effective. The 7% represent only twenty-seven respondents.

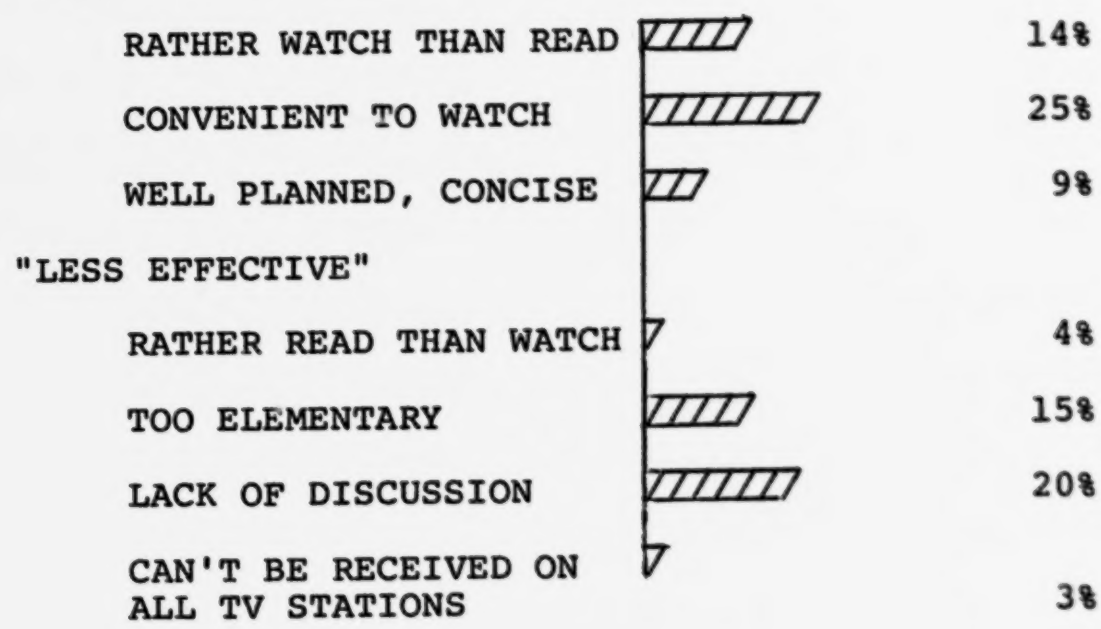
8. How would you compare the effectiveness of TV versus other media in continuing legal education?



BASE 100%: 202

Of the lawyers answering this question, 41% felt that TV is more effective than other media in continuing legal education. About a quarter of the lawyers felt that TV is less effective and the remaining 33% felt that TV is about the same as other media.

If "better than" or "less effective", please comment.



8. con't

HARD TO CONCENTRATE ON TV	7%
PUBLIC WILL MISUNDERSTAND PROGRAMS	2%

BASE 100%: 137 (multiple answers)

Of the lawyers who answered question 8(b), about half commented on why the programs were "better than" and about half commented on why TV was "less effective" than other media of instruction. Many lawyers listed more than one reason why the programs were effective or ineffective. Note that the 26% of the lawyers who answered "less effective" to question 8(a) account for about half the comments in 8(b).

The lawyers who thought the shows were "better than" other media mostly liked TV because it was available at home at times when they could watch it. The lawyers who thought the programs were less effective than other media mostly felt that classroom lectures were better because they go more deeply into the topic and there is discussion afterwards.

9. Have you obtained study notes offered by SU school of law?

BASE 100%:301

About a quarter of the lawyers answering question 9 have obtained the study notes.

Have you found them valuable?

BASE 100%:63

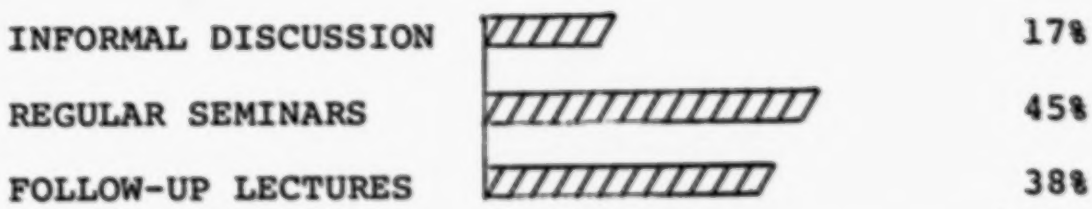
Most of the lawyers who obtained the study notes thought that they were valuable. Those who didn't find the notes valuable answered no mostly because the notes were sent to them after the program had been viewed.

10. Would periodic study group sessions keyed to the programs broadcast appeal to you?

BASE 100%: 275

About three quarters of the lawyers answering this question felt that periodic study group sessions would appeal to them. Some of the lawyers who answered this question had not viewed any of the programs, but were still interested in the group sessions.

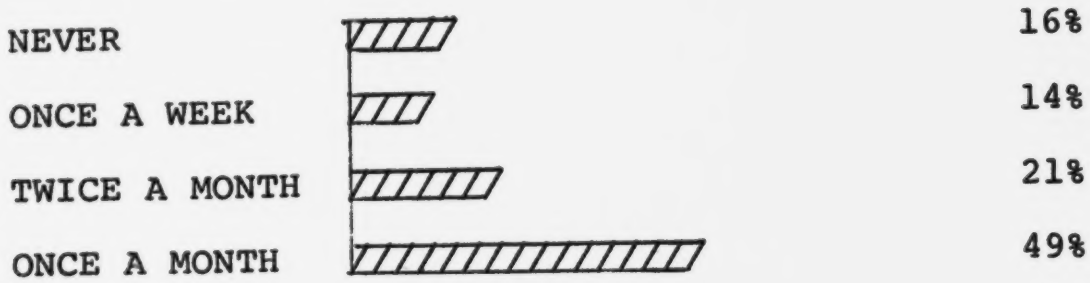
If "yes", what type?



BASE 100%: 232 (multiple answers)

About half of the lawyers answering this question were in favor of regular seminars and over a third of the lawyers were in favor of follow-up lectures. Some of the lawyers were in favor of more than one type, which is why 232 lawyers answered 10b and only 198 answered "yes" to 10a.

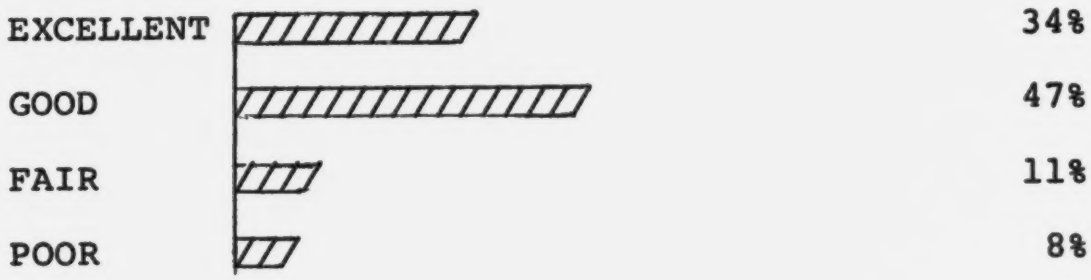
11. How often would you attend such discussion meetings if they were nearby?



BASE 100%: 207

Of the lawyers answering this question, about half said that they would attend once a month, and 16% said that they would never attend.

12. How would you rate the caliber of instruction, quality of TV presentation, use of teaching aids, and program scheduling? Please list any suggestions for improvement of the presentation.

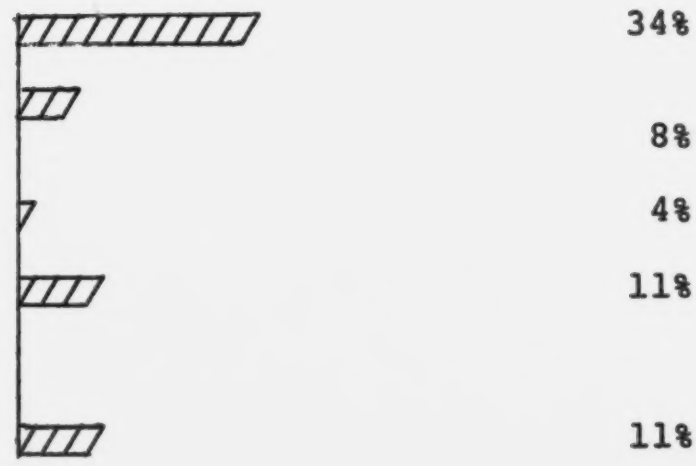


BASE 100%: 110

Of the lawyers who answered this question about 81% felt that the programs were rather good or excellent and 19% felt the programs were rather poor or fair.

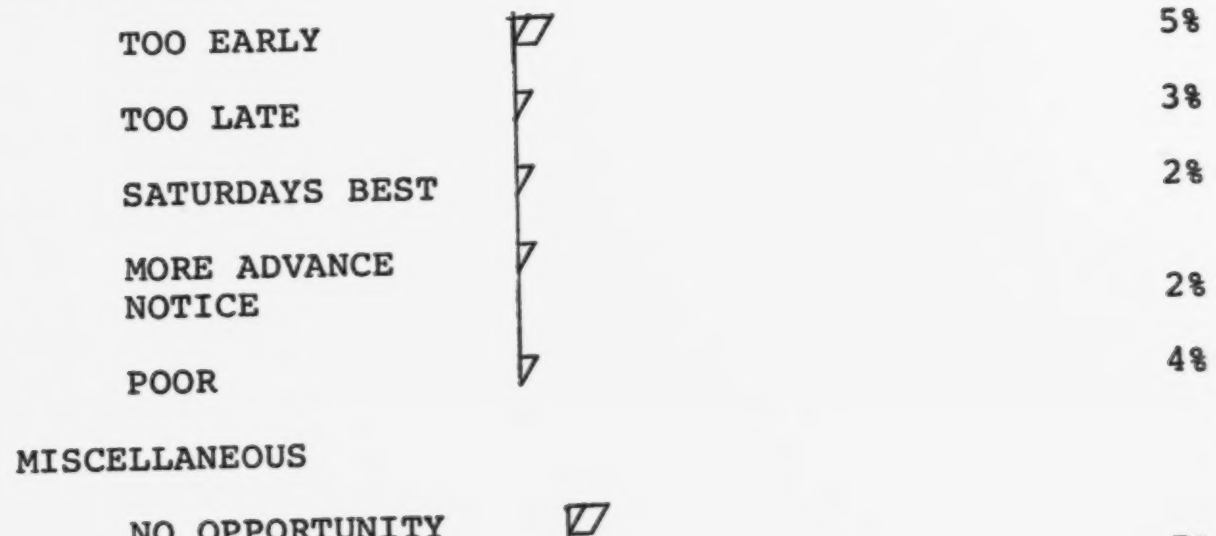
COMMENTS:

CALIBER OF INSTRUCTION



USE OF TEACHING AIDS

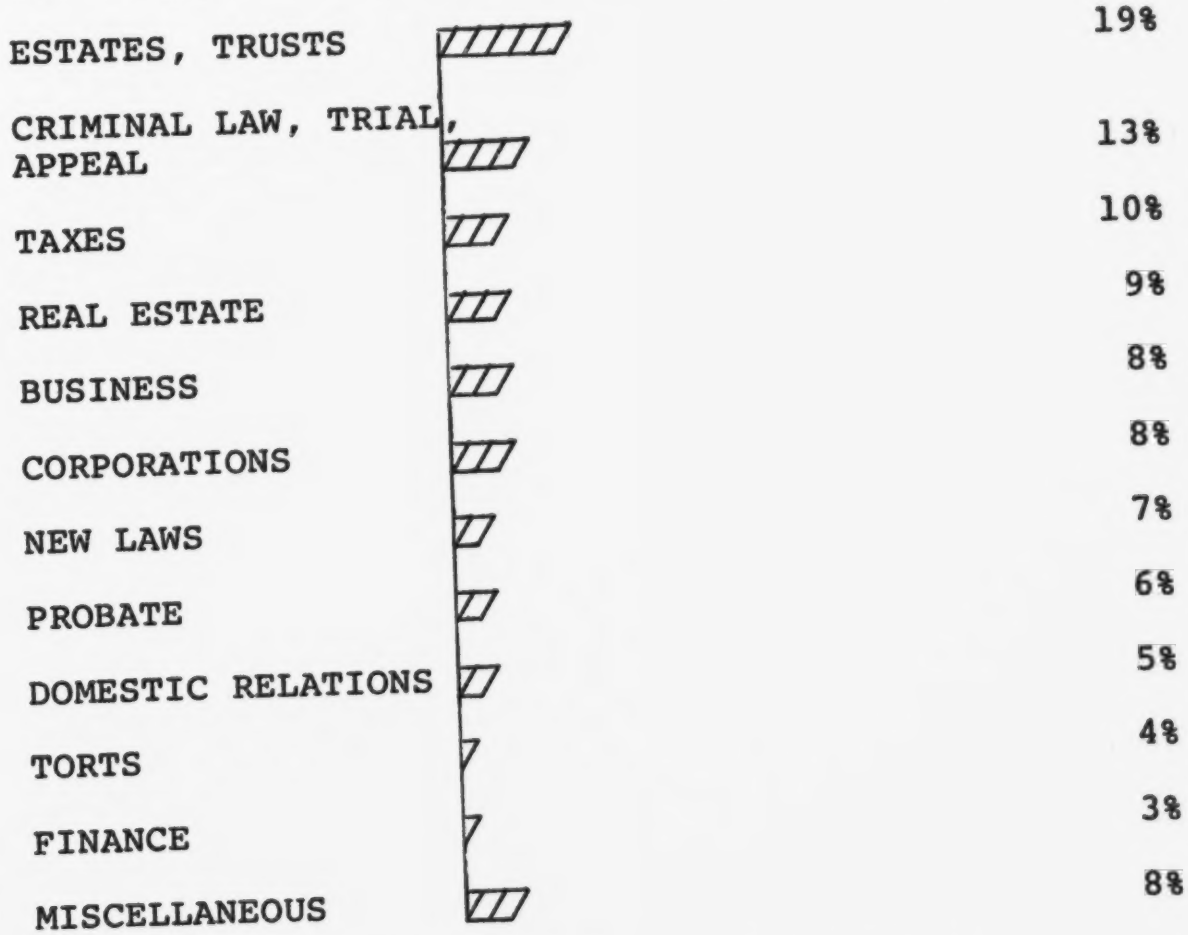
12. con't



BASE 100%: 73 (multiple answers)

Few of the lawyers commented on their rating. Those lawyers that did comment usually made more than one comment. Thus, 73 comments express the views of less than 73 lawyers. Of the lawyers who commented, over half felt that the caliber of instruction should be improved and 16% felt the programs had poor scheduling. Few of the lawyers who rated the programs goo or excellent made comments explaining why they had done so

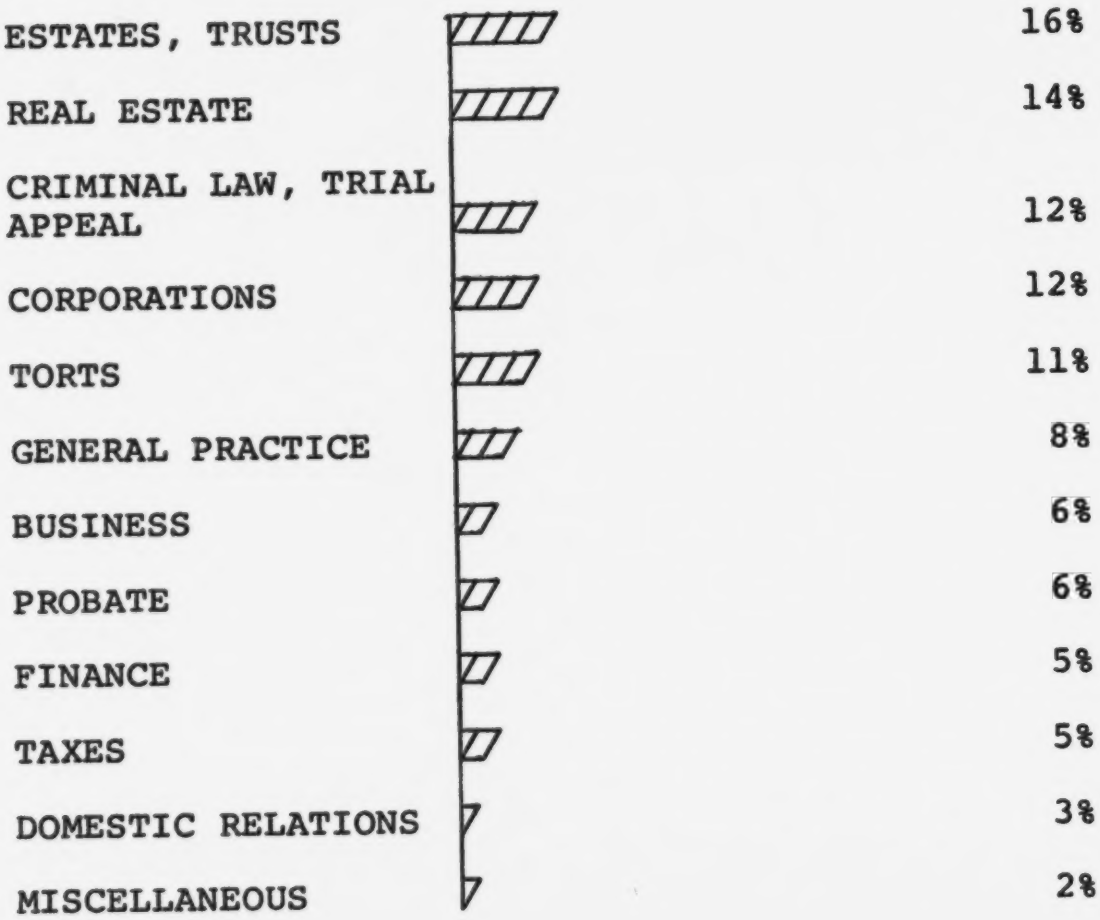
13. Please list the subjects that would be of greatest interest to you in a future TV series on the law?



BASE 100%: 524 (multiple answers)

The 369 lawyers who returned the questionnaire listed 524 subjects that would be of greatest interest to them in a future TV series on the law. About half of the lawyers were interested in estates, trusts, criminal law, trial, appeal, taxes, or real estate. The subjects with less interest were finance, torts, and domestic relations.

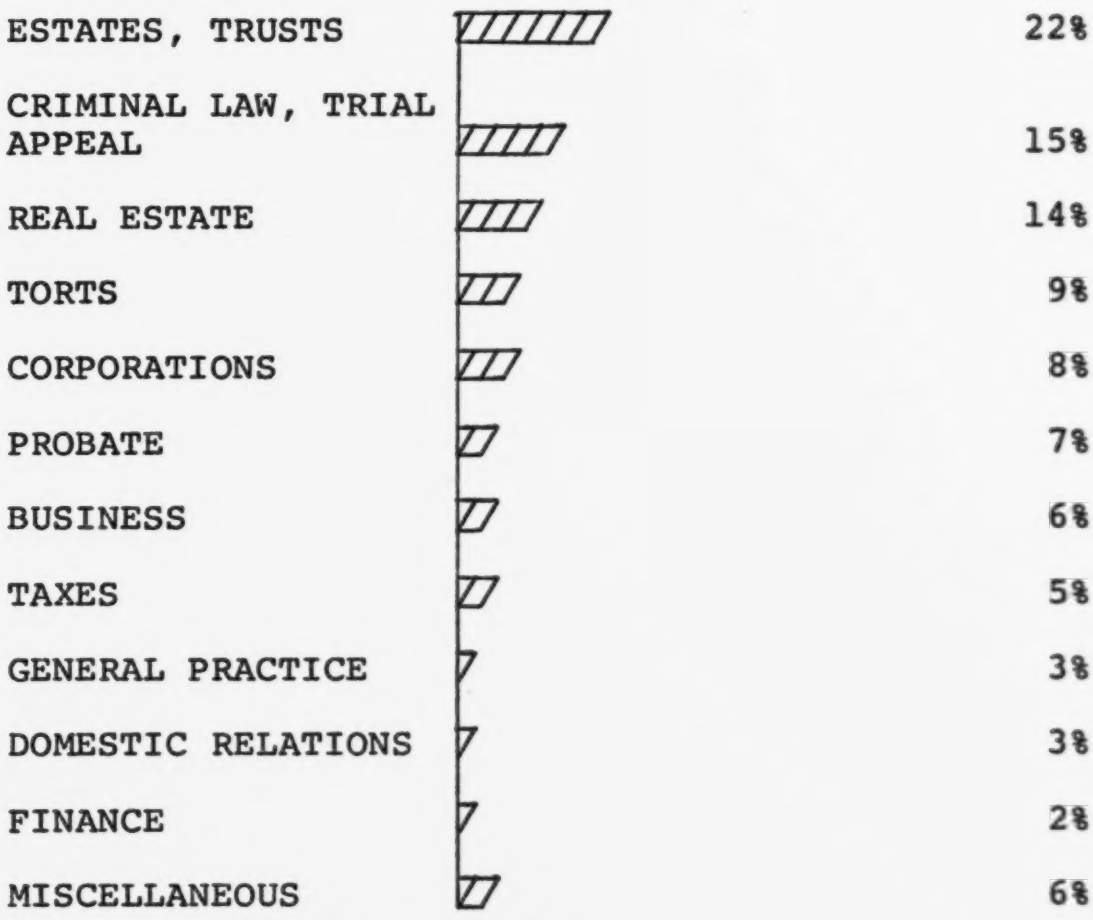
14. What area of law constitutes your major legal activity?



BASE 100%: 623 (multiple answers)

65% of the lawyers who answered this question replied that estates, real estate, trial, corporation law, or torts constituted their major legal activity. The chart is self explanatory, listing the areas in order of decreasing percentages. Some lawyers listed more than one area which accounts for the base of 623.

15. In what aspect of law does your greatest interest lie?



BASE 100%: 459 (multiple answers)

Many of the lawyers who answered this question listed more than one aspect of law that was their greatest interest. This is why the base in the question is 459. The various aspects are listed in decreasing order. That is, the most popular on top and the least popular at the bottom.

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
SCHOOL OF LAW
SURVEY OF NEW YORK ATTORNEYS-1967

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1. In the past year, have you seen any Continuing Legal Education TV programs, such as "BEHIND THE LAW"?

   ( ) Yes ( ) No If "Yes", about how many?
   ( ) One or more ( ) Half dozen ( ) Ten or more Please check one

2. Where have you usually viewed these programs? ( ) Office
   ( ) Home

3. Over what channel(s) have you seen them?

   _____ VHF _____ UHF _____ CATV cable system
   (Please give call letters) (indicate channel)

4. How did you find out about the TV series?

   ( ) County Bar Association ( ) Law Journal Publication
   ( ) TV Publicity ( ) State University College Bulletin
   ( ) Friend Recommended ( ) Chanced upon programs

5. Do you feel the programs serve a specific need for New York attorneys?

   ( ) Yes ( ) No

6. Of the programs you have viewed, which did you appreciate the most and why_____

   _____

7. Which did you believe to be the least effective and why_____

   _____

8. How would you compare effectiveness of TV vs. other media in Continuing Legal Education?
   ( ) Better than ( ) About the same ( ) Less effective

   If "Better than" or "Less effective", please comment_____

   _____

9. Have you obtained the study notes offered by the State University School of Law?

   ( ) Yes ( ) No If "Yes", did you find them valuable?
   ( ) Yes ( ) No

10. Would periodic study group sessions keyed to the programs broadcast appeal to you?

( ) Yes ( ) no If "Yes", what type?

( ) Informal Discussion with Fellow Attorneys
( ) Regular Seminars under State University School of Law Guidance
( ) Follow-up lectures by Respresentatives of the Law College or other legal specialists.

11. How often would you attend such discussion meetings if they were nearby?

( ) Never ( ) Once a week ( ) Twice a month ( ) Once a month

12. How would you rate the caliber of instruction, quality of TV presentation, use of teaching aids, and program scheduling? Please list any suggestions for improvement of presentation.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. Please list the subjects that would be of greatest interest to you in future TV series on the Law:_____

_____

14. What area of law constitutes your major legal activity?_____

_____

15. In what aspect of law does your greatest personal interest lie?

_____

_____

_____

Name_____ Age_____

Firm_____

Address_____

An addressed envelope is enclosed for return of the questionnaire.
Thank you very much for your cooperation.

State University of New York
School of Law